Regular Calumet City Council Meeting

Calumet City Council Room

Tuesday January 16, 2024

2:00 P.M.

Mayor Pro-tem Tim Zaren led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Pro-tem Tim Zaren called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Pro-tem Tim Zaren, Councilmembers Dan Strand, John Vaudrin and Amanda Hernesman, Mayor John Tuorila was present by Zoom. Also present: Clerk April Serich, Public Works Supervisor Bob Hoshal, Public Works maintenance worker Bill Berger, Engineer Alan Johnson, Benchmark, and Nashwauk Police Chief Kurt Metzig.

Motion by Vaudrin to approve the agenda with the additions, approve the Letter of Understanding with AFSCME Union correcting the clerical issues with the pay scale for the Librarian, approve the MMUA dues $183 and approve the MN Pump Works bill $1,977.02, seconded by Hernesman, all in favor, M/C.

Motion by Tuorila to approve the Dec. regular meeting minutes, seconded by Zaren, all in favor, M/C.

Motion by Strand to approve the December Clerk & Treasurer Reports & bills, Receipts $174,442.94, Disbursements $56,656.99, Investments $7,841.77 and total checking balance $520,146.84, seconded by Vaudrin, all in favor, motion carried.

Motion by Zaren to approve and adopt Resolution #24-01-16, a resolution setting the depositories for 2024 as Park State Bank and First National Bank of Coleraine, seconded by Hernesman, all in favor, upon vote taken, for: Tuorila, Zaren, Strand, Vaudrin and Hernesman. Opposed: none. Resolution was declared duly passed and adopted.

**Meeting Attendance and Reports**:

Greenway Recreation Bd. No report.

Cemetery Bd: Vaudrin reported that the board discussed the tax levy.

WMMPB: Zaren reported that there was a legislative update presentation and discussion with Senator Farnsworth, Representative Igo and Representative Davis, they stated that they will work on the top WMMPB priorities. The 2024 legislative session is normally considered as a state bonding year. They want to improve the mining permitting and regulation reform proposals along with other items.

Zaren reported on the meeting with Mesabi Metallics. The bosses from India seemed very sincere and a form letter will be sent out to communities for support of their project. There is a presentation about the Mesabi Metallics project on Jan. 29th at 5:30 p.m. at the Keewatin Community Center.

Strand reported that he thanked Representative Igo and Senator Farnsworth for helping the City of Calumet get IRRR grant funding for the Gary St. project.

Police Services Report: Dec. balance=2 hours owed by the city. Nashwauk Police Chief Kurt Metzig reported that they continue to patrol the city. There has not been a lot of blight. Discussed Red Rock Auto maybe getting a dealer’s license through the state.

The Itasca County Sheriff’s Office SWAT and K-9 units used the old bank building for training.

**Comments and Requests from the Floor:** Dan Schermerhorn questioned why the pine tree was cut down across from his property. The City of Calumet did not have a choice. Northern Natural Gas Co. was required to remove the trees by the State of Minnesota where the high-pressure gas line runs through.

Gary Street County Project Update: Engineer Alan Johnson reported that they have the field work done on Gary St. and will be meeting with Itasca Co. At the end of January, we will meet and go over the draft before they share it with Itasca Co. by mid-February. Any changes will need to be made before the bids go out in the Spring.

Randy Ott from Waste Management discussed the 5-year contract with some changes. CPI-5% minimum, 32-gallon trash can $9.87 to $16.50 per month, 64-gallon $18.97 to $22.21, 96-gallon $28.61 to $32.21 and 64-gallon recycling E/O week $7.06 to $10.06 per month. Mayor Tuorila questioned why they couldn’t put their trash service on hold while on vacation or away for the winter. Randy stated that yes, people can put their accounts on hold just call him with the account number. Motion by Zaren to approve the 5-year contract with Waste Management with the rate increase, seconded by Hernesman, all in favor, motion carried.

**Unfinished Business:**

Utility Shut-offs: 11 shut-off letters will be sent. Statements will be sent to those who did not pay the increased rate of $90 per month.

Update on Blight: checks will be made at the previous blight properties.

Update on Radio Tower: Mayor Tuorila has been having ongoing communication with our attorney and Everest’s attorney. The DNR lease for the road is a concern. Daniel Fields from Tower Point is going to make an offer to purchase the tower.

Discuss the options for the old bank building: The council decided to set up a work session with Jordan from DNR to give an update on moving equipment to city property and Sarah Carling from CEDA to discuss the various projects-park upgrades and what the options are for the old bank building. Clerk Serich will check with Sarah and Jordan then set up a work session and let all the council know as well as Alan from Benchmark.

**New Business:**

Fire Chief Ladd Finke gave the council a history of the fire department. It is a department of the city. Calumet and Marble own the fire dept. building and equipment. They will be selling the old fire truck this year for $70,000 and talked about getting grants and refinancing the new fire truck loan in a few years. They currently pay $60,000 in payments per year. The council is invited to the Relief Assn. meetings on the 1st Wednesday of Dec., March, June and Sept. 6:30 -7:00 p.m. at the fire hall.

Motion by Hernesman to approve payment of $14,485 in Public Safety Aid to the Greenway Fire Dept., seconded by Vaudrin, all in favor, motion carried.

**2024 Board and Committee Appointments:**

Official Newspaper: Scenic Range News Forum

Legal Council: Brian Bengtson, John Dimich and Itasca County Attorney’s Office

City Engineer: Benchmark Engineering, Alan Johnson

City Depositories: Park State Bank and First National Bank of Coleraine

Insurance Agency: Itasca Reliable and LMC

Mayor Pro-Tem: Tim Zaren

Greenway Joint Powers Fire Board: 1. Mayor John Tuorila 2. Tim Zaren Alt. John Vaudrin

Library Board: Amanda Hernesman Also appointed: April Serich 3-yr. term and Kim Pfiefer 3-yr. term

Cemetery Board: John Vaudrin Alternate: Amanda Hernesman

WMMPB: Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board: 1. Mayor John Tuorila 2. Tim Zaren Alt. John Vaudrin

WMMB Hwy Committee: Mayor John Tuorila

Weed Inspector: Mayor John Tuorila Assistant Weed Inspector: Bob Hoshal

Greenway Recreation Board: Dan Strand Alt. Amanda Hernesman

Blight Committee: 1. Mayor John Tuorila 2. Tim Zaren 3. John Vaudrin

Civil Service Director: John Vaudrin Alt. Mayor John Tuorila

Building Inspector: Andrew Sharpe

Motion by Strand to approve the 2024 Board and Committee Appointments, seconded by Hernesman, all in favor, motion carried.

Motion by Zaren to approve the 2024 LMCIT Property/Casualty Insurance premium $8,155 with, a $250 deductible, seconded by Vaudrin, all in favor, motion carried. Check on non-smoking form.

Motion by Hernesman to approve the 2024 rates (same as 2023) for the Scenic Range News Forum, seconded by Tuorila, all in favor, motion carried.

Motion by Vaudrin to approve the 2024 rates (same as 2023) for Benchmark Engineering, seconded by Zaren, all in favor, motion carried.

Motion by Tuorila to approve the 2024 rates $185 per hour (increase of $10 per hour) for Attorney Brian Bengtson, seconded by Vaudrin, all in favor, motion carried.

Motion by Zaren to approve a zoning permit according to our Sign Ord. for Red Rock Auto 10x20 advertising sign to be put up by Aspen Signs, seconded by Strand, all in favor, motion carried.

Motion by Tuorila to approve the MMUA dues of $183, seconded by Zaren, all in favor, motion carried.

Motion by Zaren to approve the Letter of Understanding with AFSCME Union correcting the clerical issues in the pay scale for the librarian as follows: 2023= $25.29, 2024=$26.29 and 2025=$27.29 per hour, seconded by Vaudrin, all in favor, motion carried.

Council approved the Mn Pump Works bill $1,977.02.

The council received a letter from the City of Nashwauk requesting attendance from each entity in the Nashwauk Ambulance Service Area to discuss the future of the ambulance service on Jan. 17th at 6:30 in the Nashwauk City Hall. John Vaudrin will try to attend.

Discussion on the Stauber Projects funding a new city hall roof or renovations for cost reduction and energy efficiency.

The Council approved putting $1,000 in the Sick Leave and Retirement savings account and $1,000 in the Equipment fund savings account. Treasurer Mary Garner will transfer the money over.

Mayor Pro-tem Zaren adjourned the meeting at 3:53 p.m. Tuesday, January 16, 2024.

Respectfully Submitted, Approved,

April Serich, City Clerk Tim Zaren, Mayor Pro-Tem